

Monday, May 08, 2006

## I. Work of the Cross Articulation Work Team, October 2005 -June 2006:

The Cross Articulation Work Team met four times between October, 2005 and April 2006 to decide how best to improve transfer and articulation between two-year and four-year institutions and among two-year institutions and among four-year institutions within the State of Iowa. The Committee was made up of faculty and administrators from the community colleges, four-year public and private institutions, and the Iowa Department of Education. This group is geographically representative of the state in order to best capture a clear picture of transfer and articulation issues. The decision by this work team was to draft an action plan that addressed six areas:

- 1) **Notify all important higher education entities in the state about the Grant in general, the articulation team goals in particular and obtain institutional support for Articulation Work Team projects.** The goal is to present to the fifteen Community College Presidents, the Board of Regents, the State Board of Education, the Regents Committee on Educational Relations, the Iowa Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, and the Private College Presidents' Group to make the power leadership of the state of Iowa aware of the efforts that this committee will undertake and to garner early support for these efforts.
- 2) **Improve pre-service teacher candidates' preparation state-wide.** The goal is to compile, compare and create a document of commonalities based upon INTASC standards, define the level of sophistication and define which competencies need to be taught and assessed at two year college level as a "process pilot," disseminate this "process pilot" to two year and four year faculty for discussion and pilot with them and with cooperating teachers in field experiences. The intent is then to create a process for evaluating the extent to which INTASC standards have been successfully imbedded into two-year college curriculum pilot and share this information across the state and the nation.
- 3) **Create a state-wide articulation agreement among two and four year colleges of teacher preparation.** This goal is based upon some preliminary investigation on what other states in the United States were doing with Teacher Education at the two-year and four-year levels nationwide. This investigation was accomplished through two conferences sponsored by the Education Commission of the States which occurred before the grant began. Members of the Articulation Work Team were part of the delegations sent by the Iowa Department of Education to these conferences. The intended goal of the grant's work team discussions is to create a state-wide consensus on an articulation model of what would be commonly known as an Associate of Arts in Teaching, adapted from the State of Maryland's model to Iowa needs. The team has identified several possible topics for discussion statewide that we believe will lead to this consensus which may include: minimum grade requirements as evidence of content knowledge for admission to teacher education programs; minimum GPA requirement; identification of what General Education courses should be suggested for exit from two-year and entrance to four-year education programs; what education courses should be suggested for exit from two-year and entrance to four-year education programs; what competencies for two-year teacher education candidates should have completed at the end of their AA programs; what clinical experiences should two-year teacher education candidates be able to document in terms of hours, site visits, reflections, student, cooperating teacher and self evaluations; and finally, to hold a statewide concerning what the knowledge, skills and dispositions for continuation in teacher education programs.
- 4) **To create a state-wide agreement on basic competency testing to enter teacher education programs.** The focus here is on reaching consensus on accepting each other's choice of basic competency tests with established cut scores by individual institutions.
- 5) **To strengthen math and oral/written communications skills of pre-service candidates.** The aim is to set up a series of statewide faculty conferences and to guide the discussion work with Arts and Sciences faculty and Education faculty at two and four year institutions through meetings designed around transfer patterns throughout the State of Iowa among partners.

- 6) **To research successful articulation factors and barriers for students transferring from Iowa two-year to four year colleges and four-year to four-year colleges into education programs.** This task will involve surveying institutions on what difficulties they are reporting and surveying Iowa's education transfer students and presenting this data to the higher education community with recommendations on improvement of the overall transfer and articulation of college students in Iowa .

## II. Anticipated impact of the activities:

This action plan reflects the concerns that have immersed in higher education with respect to teacher education at both two and four-year levels in the State of Iowa. The plan also reflects the political nature of these efforts and a willingness to tackle highly sensitive issues head-on. The State of Iowa prides itself on its voluntary cooperation on matters that affect the welfare of students. The action plan of this work team respects that history and cultural value in designing its activities for the next two years.

We are anticipating that we have the full support of the leadership of Higher Education across the State of Iowa because the letters were sent out by the Leadership Team of the grant through the Iowa Department of Education in November, 2005.

The team expects to have data on how well the INTASC standards have become imbedded into the curriculum statewide within all community colleges courses and programs. This voluntary standardization should lead to better-prepared students upon transfer and improved performance at four-year institutions.

A statewide articulation agreement on teaching at the AA level is a lofty goal. It would be an historic agreement because it would include private institutions as well as the Regents and community colleges. There is precedence for such an agreement between the Regents and the community colleges, so we would be building on a positive past history of cooperation and expanding the partnership to include the private institutions. Such a voluntary agreement could provide a model for the nation. Should the agreement not be possible, the door is still open for further discussion and for agreement among willing parties.

An agreement on basic competency cut scores among the four-year institutions is already on the way to becoming reality. Letters were sent out in November and the item has been discussed at the April 21, 2006, IACTE meeting. Participants are expected to return to this at the September, 2006 conference, where a vote is anticipated.

The goal of bringing together the Arts & Sciences and Education faculty at two-and four-year institutions is intended to be informational and historic. No meetings among these groups have ever taken place at the statewide level, much less voluntary gatherings. It is anticipated that this will become a regular annual event, and that as a result, Arts & Sciences faculty will be more aware of the needs of those students who are planning careers in Education, especially at the two-year level for Elementary Education majors, for it is at this level that most of the content work in preparation for teaching is

accomplished. It is anticipated that this will raise the level of teacher pre-professional preparation both by integration of curriculum and through cooperation at two and four-year faculty levels.

The survey of success and barriers is intended to provide a blueprint for further discussion and cooperation based upon fact that will extend beyond the limited time of the grant. It is also seen as a way to dispel myths about successes and barriers in transfer and articulation in Iowa once the results of the survey are disseminated statewide.